

**Media Release  
April 27, 2004  
KBI Headquarters  
Director Larry Welch**

Several months ago I stood before you in this auditorium and announced that we, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, had discovered that, in October, 1991, DNA evidence regarding a particular suspect had been inadvertently mislabeled. A blood sample from one individual had mistakenly been labeled as being a blood sample from another individual. Accordingly, the wrong sample was submitted to the FBI Forensic Laboratory for analysis under the name of Douglas S. Belt, a suspect in a rape investigation. The resulting negative finding from the FBI Laboratory caused the rape investigation to focus on other individuals.

As I told you on that occasion, unfortunately, in law enforcement, unlike other professions, when we make a mistake, and we did make a mistake, justice can be frustrated and delayed and even thwarted, and innocent citizens may suffer as a result.

I told you that in the KBI we routinely expect excellence and we always expect success. In October, 1991, in this case, we fell short of those lofty, but routine expectations.

I admitted then that words like apology, regret, unfortunate, sorrow and contrition were, and are today, inadequate and inappropriate to describe this mistake.

The bottom line was, and is, that our mistake in 1991 may have contributed to a situation which permitted a prime suspect to remain free and to continue criminal activity.

It is important to emphasize that this was a clerical error, not an error in DNA. It is also important to emphasize that Mr. Belt has not been convicted of any charge related to this matter and, like everyone else, enjoys a presumption of innocence.

As a nationally-accredited forensic laboratory, I promised Attorney General Phill Kline, the Kansas criminal justice system and the citizens of our state that we would conduct exhaustive internal and external reviews to ensure that this was, as we believed then, an isolated error.

Today we are here to share with you the excellent results of those internal and external forensic and administrative reviews and the confirmation that it was an isolated error. And to announce the continuation of national accreditation for our Topeka and Great Bend KBI forensic laboratories. And to also proudly announce the achievement, just last week, of national accreditation for our

Kansas City and Pittsburg forensic laboratories, as well.

Today we also announce the implementation, as we promised on that other occasion, of the automated state-of-the-art Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), wherein bar codes are attached to each piece of evidence as it is received in any of our laboratories. The computer system, thereafter, tracks all activities involving that particular item of evidence, eliminating, hopefully, all possibility of human handling error.

To elaborate on the audits, reviews, accreditation and LIMS, I'd like to introduce KBI Deputy Director Terry Knowles who has oversight responsibilities for the KBI Laboratory Division.